

Changes to Idaho's ESEA Waiver



Approval Of Idaho's ESEA Waiver

- Idaho's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Waiver Application was approved by the US Department of Education on Wednesday, October 17.



Approval of Idaho's ESEA Waiver

- The State Board of Education originally approved Idaho's application on February 16th, 2012.
- Since that time, the SDE has worked with the US Department of Education to make recommended changes to Idaho's application based on peer and US Department of Education staff recommendations.
- The final version of the waiver was approved by the State Board of Education on October 18th.



Points Allocated to High School Graduation Rate

- Idaho was required to change the allocation of points in the Postsecondary and Career Readiness measures.
 - Now, 50 percent of the points in this measure will go toward graduation rate.
 - The remaining 50 points will be split between advanced opportunities and college entrance exams.
 - Idaho was in the process of making a similar change for Alternative Schools based on feedback we had received from superintendents and alternative school administrators but have now made this change for all schools at the request of the US Department of Education.



Percentage of Evaluation Based On ISAT

- Idaho was required to add language to IDAPA 08.02.03.105 stipulating that of the 50% of teacher and administrator evaluations that will be based on student achievement, a percentage must be tied specifically to growth in student achievement as measured on the ISAT in all grades and subjects.
 - This proposed rule was approved initially by the State Board of Education at their August 2012 meeting and is currently out for public comment.



LEP 2 and 3

- Idaho was asked to remove all language within the waiver that would have removed English Language Learners in their second and third years from the reading and language arts in the achievement calculations.
 - The U.S. Department of Education notified us that this was not among the waivers that comprise ESEA Flexibility and that Idaho would need to file a separate waiver to pursue this flexibility.



AMOs and Improvement Plans

- Idaho was required to add Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMOs) to the waiver.
 - Any Four- or Five-Star schools that have gaps in achievement between their At-Risk Subgroup and their overall student population greater than the statewide average for two consecutive years must submit a Continuous Improvement Plan that addresses only that subgroup gap and the measures the school will take to address it.



Testing 95% of Students

- The U.S. Department of Education requested that Idaho further increase the accountability for schools that do not test at least 95% of their students on the ISAT.
 - As a result of this request, a Five-Star School would drop two Star Ratings if it does not test at least 95% of its students.
 - All other schools would drop one Star Rating if they do not test at least 95% of students, ensuring that the highest Star Rating any school not testing at least 95% of students could receive is a Three -Star Rating.



Elimination of SES and School Choice

- Idaho has modified formal Supplemental Education Services (SES) and School Choice as defined by ESEA under Idaho's waiver application.
- The state also will no longer require districts to set aside any percentage of the district allocation of Title I-A funds for School Choice and SES.
 - This is a change from our previous request to waive Choice and SES for one year and then operate under a revised Choice and Supplemental Tutoring Services program moving forward.
 - In its place, Idaho will require its lowest-performing schools and districts that are identified under the One-Star and Two-Star categories to provide a plan, within the WISE Tool, for how they will meet the needs of students who are currently not proficient and who have not made adequate growth on either the Reading or Math sections of the ISAT.
 - This plan must include information on how the district or school will provide students with extended learning time and how the school will make students and parents aware of their enrollment options that are currently available to students and parents as outlined in Idaho law.



Entrance Criteria for Priority and Focus Schools

- Idaho was required to make revisions to our entrance and exit criteria for our Priority (1 Star) and Focus (2 Star) schools.
 - In the original ESEA Waiver guidance published by the U.S. Department of Education, it asked states to develop an accountability system in which they would identify their lowest 5% of schools to be labeled as Priority Schools and their next lowest 10% to be labeled as Focus Schools.
 - The U.S. Department of Education identified Priority Schools as those schools that have the lowest achievement and lacking progress over time.
 - Focus schools were identified as those schools that have the largest achievement gaps for the ESEA subpopulations.



Entrance Criteria for Priority and Focus Schools

- As Idaho developed our accountability system, we chose to develop the Five-Star Rating System in which the lowest 5% of schools would be identified as 1 Star Schools and the next lowest 10% would be identified as 2 Star Schools.
 - As a result, Idaho's criterion for 1 and 2 Star schools is more comprehensive than the federal definition of Priority and Focus.
 - During the process of getting our waiver approved, SDE staff has worked with the U.S. Department of Education to ensure that the schools we had identified as 1 Star and 2 Star Schools were as close a match as possible to the schools that would have been identified using the U.S. Department of Education's definition of Priority and Focus schools.



Entrance Criteria for Priority and Focus Schools

- As a result of these ongoing conversations, Idaho was required to redefine our entrance and exit criteria for Focus and Priority schools as defined by the US Department of Education.
 - In Idaho's original waiver submission, it took two years of a 1 Star ranking or 2 Star ranking to enter the Priority and or Focus status, respectively.
 - Likewise, it took two years at a 3 Star ranking or above to exit that status.
 - The requirement of the U.S. Department of Education is that Idaho identify Priority (1 Star) and Focus (2 Star) and those schools must start developing and executing their improvement plans this school year.



Exit Criteria for Priority and Focus Schools

- Schools that have been identified as Priority (1 Star) and Focus (2 Star) this year must implement their improvement plans for three years before being allowed to exit regardless of their Star Rating moving forward.
- These changes in the entrance and exit criteria only apply to those schools that are identified as Focus or Priority Status this year.
- All schools that enter a 1 Star or 2 Star status in the future will still be able to utilize the two-year entrance and exit criterion that was outlined in Idaho's original ESEA Waiver.



At-Risk Subgroup

- Idaho will calculate growth for subgroups by combining all subgroups into one at-risk subgroup and only counting each student one time.
 - This change was made to ensure that more schools would reach the N count of 25 which would avoid schools not having to be accountable for subgroups and it ensures that larger schools that do have 25 students in each subgroup are not being penalized multiple times for the same student.



For More Information

Idaho's ESEA Website

<http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/esea/>

